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Memorandum

To: ENRP Co-Chairs Sean O'Connor & Barry Weinstein, MD

From: Government Affairs Subcommittee Member Wright Ellis

Re: October & November 2003 meetings

Date: December 5, 2003

The Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership's Government Affairs Subcommittee met October 15 and November 10, 2003 at Christino's at the Amherst Marriott. Present for the October meeting (a joint meeting with the Economic Development Subcommittee) were subcommittee members McMahon and Weinstein, as well as Economic Development subcommittee member Titus. Present for the November meeting (also a joint meeting with the Economic Development Subcommittee) were subcommittee members McMahon, Ellis, and Weinstein, as well as Economic Development subcommittee members Titus and Eldridge.

Electronic Permitting Marketing / Implementation

Following approval by the general membership to offer its services in marketing electronic permitting to local governments, the subcommittee talked about implementation steps. The UB Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth presented the site to the Erie County Association of Local Governments on November 20. It was suggested that this be followed-up with a meeting of code enforcement officers in January, who could then take the information back to their municipal officials. If need be, we can "take the show on the road" to elicit participation. The test communities can also be helpful in this by acting as vocal supporters of the site to their peers.

Electronic Permitting Spin-off Projects

Subcommittee member Weinstein proposed that electronic permitting be used to segue into two related and important efforts – standardized zoning and pre-permitting.

Building off of the new state building codes and the efforts to standardize permit forms for the e-permitting effort, Weinstein suggested forming a committee with local officials to standardize zoning, which could

result in making the counties more business friendly. The first step in this process would be to standardize zoning terminology.

The ENRP Government Affairs Subcommittee is seeking concept approval to form a committee to begin work on standardized terminology and zoning.

Pre-permitting would tie together e-permitting, the Regional Economic Development Database (REDD), the site readiness study, and the marketing efforts of the Buffalo Niagara Enterprise (BNE). The idea is to pick a property in each municipality and demonstrate the potential impact of having that site pre-permitted to allow for immediate construction and economic development. The BNE could market such pre-permitted sites. A logical place to start would be sites that are shovel-ready, then proceed to sites that need rezoning but not much remediation. Another suggestion is to base the number of sites on the population of the municipality.

REDD

As funding is being negotiated for REDD for 2004 (\$60,000 of the \$100,000 project cost was funded in the 2004 Erie County budget), ways to expand and encourage the use of the database were discussed. It was decided that the goal should be to get a site in each municipality on the REDD. Municipally owned sites are usually included, but some realtors are still hesitant to include their sites on the REDD or Site Finder for proprietary reasons.

One way to approach this goal would be to meet with local governments on the REDD in early 2004. It was also felt that all the subcommittees should be updated on the REDD at that time.

Other Topics

Other topics discussed included MUNNIX, the Regional Economic Development Strategy, the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority, and pooled health insurance.